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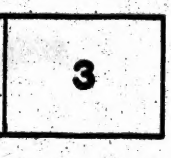
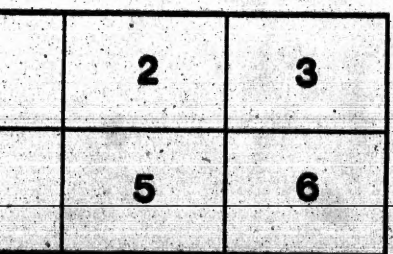




BYTOWN DIVISION, S. OF T., SERIES OF TRACTS.

No. 3.

TO YOU,

WHOSE influence is great, and who occupy a high place in society, the writer would address a few earnest words. Your aid is wanted to extirpate an evil that cannot be removed without you. You are an important and influential member of a social circle, in which some of the members are addicted to the use of intoxicating beverages; or perhaps you use them yourself occasionally. If so, have you ever thought of the consequences likely to result from such a practice? You are wise, it may be, in many respects, and thoughtful perhaps of many things; but are you acting wisely and thoughtfully in drinking moderately of the intoxicating draught? Did the idea ever enter your mind, that he who drinks moderately of distilled, vinous, or fermented liquors is more likely to become intemperate than he who totally abstains? That if there could be a total abandonment of moderate drinking, there would be no drunkenness; that if drunkenness could be banished from the land, how much of the misery now suffered, would never fall upon human life? The author of this short essay, directed to you, conceives the above to be important questions for your considerations, and would affectionately invite you to think upon them with an intensity and earnestness proportioned to their importance; and when you have decided them in the affirmative, as you must, he then solicits you to be kind enough to yourself, your friends, your social circle, your neighborhood and your country, to ask yourself, What can I do? Have I any power hitherto left unexercised which might have been spent in lessening the evil resulting from intemperance? Does my patronage of the well-kept hotel, the genteel oyster saloon, or the large wine store, help to confer respectability and permanence upon those institutions? Does my drinking from the festive wine-cup make the practice seem respectable in the elevated social circle in which I move? and do the influences of that social circle extend to the circle below, and from that to the one next below, and so on to the humblest grade of obscure life? and do they of

obscure life drink of cheap and destructive intoxicating fluids, to the increasing of their poverty, and misery, and degradation, because of the down-flowing of my example? Can I exercise an influence over my social circle by personal total abstinence, and thereby induce some of my acquaintance, already far gone in habits of intemperance, to renounce forever the intoxicating poison? Can I minister an efficient, yet inoffensive, remonstrance against the practice of drinking, by always refusing the draught proffered by the hand of friendship? If I have the power to abstain, and my abstinence will produce the effect above suggested, what is my duty to the wife I love, to the children I would rear up in habits of sobriety, to the social circle I profess to regard, and to the country I am bound as a good citizen to serve? Certainly it is as much my duty to leave undone every act productive of disadvantage as to perform every other act for the advantage of all the interests valued by society. Do I, as a drinker of intoxicating liquors, leave undone that which should not be done? Is it not apparent, that I not only do that which I should not, but also pay for the privilege of hurting myself, and, by my example and influence, also endanger those with whom I am connected by various ties? Let me ponder on the subject, and if I have done wrong, let me do so no more, but renounce the practice of drinking; and more than that, let me also exercise an active influence in the promulgation of correct principles, that may lead to correct practices in this respect.

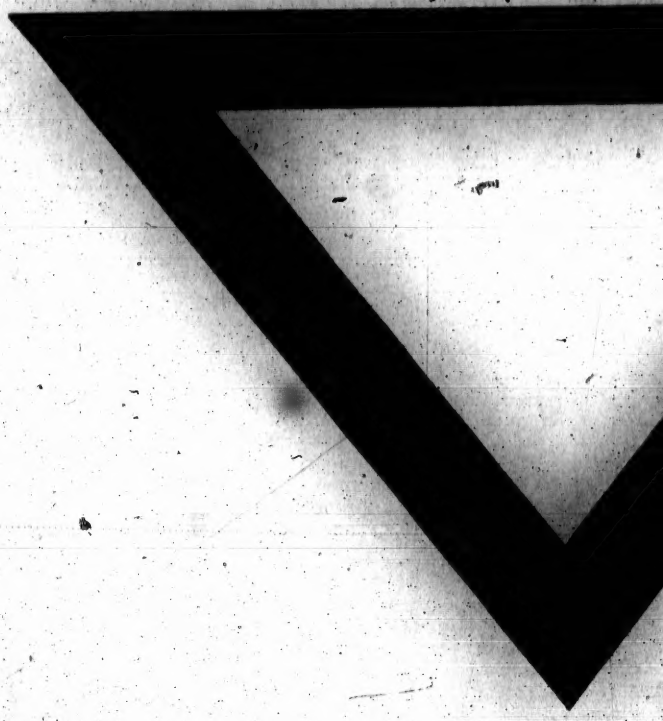
Am I a man of wealth, complaining of the heavy tax imposed upon me by the laws of the land in which I live? Have I ever considered how much of this tax is produced by the practice of drinking intoxicating beverages, and have I ever thought of the diminution of my wealth because of this evil? Have I ever observed the difference between owning a given amount of property in a country where the people are intelligent, industrious, peaceable, and sober, and owning the same amount in a country where they are the reverse of all these; and that in all ages and all places the intrinsic value of worldly possessions is in direct proportion to the intelligence, sobriety, and peaceableness of the inhabitants who surround those possessions? And if these things are true, do not even the teachings of self-interest side with the law of conscience in this respect? Am I a merchant, and can I exercise my public spirit by uniting with my fellow-men in setting

up and fostering great schemes for the advancement of manufactures and trade, that the world may be benefited by the cheapness and abundance of the necessaries and luxuries of life, and that the inconveniences and evils of human condition may be diminished? Have I ever thought that half the amount of intellectual and physical energy devoted to the casting down of intemperance, which is eagerly given to enterprises of infinitely less importance, would be more than sufficient to redeem the world from the untold evils resulting from drinking and drunkenness? And if I have never thought of these things, nor acted in accordance with such thoughts, am I not self-convicted of being busy with matters of comparatively slight importance, while enterprises of great pith and moment are languishing, and humanity is suffering, and that I and my associates are leaving this glorious design in the hands of an humble an inefficient few who are hopelessly inadequate to its accomplishment?

Am I a preacher of the Gospel, a healer of the sick, or a dispenser of the law? and do I throw the weight of my professional influence on the right side? Do I, as a preacher, reason as frequently, as pointedly, and feelingly of temperance and intemperance as I do of righteousness in general, and of a judgment to come? Do I, as a physician, exercise due care to avoid the planting of a destructive appetite by rejecting alcoholic prescriptions? Do I, as a dispenser of law, practice its requirements by meting out just punishment to those who violate the laws made for discouraging intemperance? Do I, as a man looked up to by the mass, as wiser than the mass, walk honestly as in the day, and not in rioting and drunkenness? If I do, I fulfil an important responsibility; if I do not, let me now resolve to be no longer delinquent in a matter of so much importance, but go at once, and help on to victory those who have heretofore struggled unsuccessfully with this destructive vice. Am I, as a mother and a wife, desiring as fervently, the present and eternal welfare of my husband and children as my own? Do I take as much care to avoid the fostering causes of intemperance as my station allows me to exercise? Am I watchful to prevent in my small children the formation of every luxurious habit that tends to strengthen the animal appetites? Do I avoid in the culinary department, all use of everything intoxicating? and am I immovably determined, as far as my authority will go, to drive away and forever keep

from the table and the house over which I preside, all forms of intoxicating beverages, from the mildest fermentations to the strongest of distilled liquors? Am I stern in prohibiting the unnecessary administration of alcoholic preparations to my children, and the rest of the household, in drops and tinctures? Am I diligent in imbuing the rising mind with lessons of abhorrence toward this evil? Do I preserve, as far as possible, the cheerfulness and comfort of home, by avoiding all unnecessary complaint and every exhibition of ill-temper which drives the husband and the son to the tavern, to seek that cordial welcome and agreeable deference they do not find at home?

If I am short of duty in any one or all these respects, let me remember the deep sufferings that fall to woman's lot by reason of intemperance, and, pitying her fate, no longer shrink from the peculiar and great responsibilities resting upon my sex and me. Am I son or daughter of devoted parents whose hourly prayers ascend to Heaven for my welfare? and am I sufficiently thoughtful of, and obedient to, their loving admonitions? Do I, as a son, obey the voice of parental affection that bids me beware of the delusive and dangerous temptations presented by the gaudy splendor of the drinking house? or am I thoughtlessly and smoothly, yet hastily, gliding along the treacherous stream ending in death, too terrible to be described? Am I, as a daughter, receiving, or willing to receive, the addresses of the young gentleman whose breath is tainted by the odors of the wine, or stronger drinks? and am I, by that rash and wicked act, working out for myself a future strewed with all the miseries that render life intolerable, in which, perhaps, may be seen the gloomy picture of a comfortless abode, tenanted by uneducated, ill-clad, and hungry children, fleeing from the ruffian violence of a drunken father to the feeble arms of a trembling, heart-broken mother? Let me listen to the hitherto neglected voices of friends and conscience that cry beware! beware! and shrink from his polluted hand as from a viper's touch.

To YOU, in conclusion, the writer would say, Practice continually the doctrine of total abstinence from all intoxicating beverages, and preach the doctrine as occasion presents itself, and do such other things as your hands, and heart, and mind may find to do, that intemperance, the great increaser of every kind of evil, may be diminished, and, if possible, destroyed.

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